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(54) **WET INK TEXTURE ENGINE FOR REDUCED LAG DIGITAL INKING**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **G06F 3/0412** (2013.01); **G06K 9/00402**
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2360/121 (2013.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

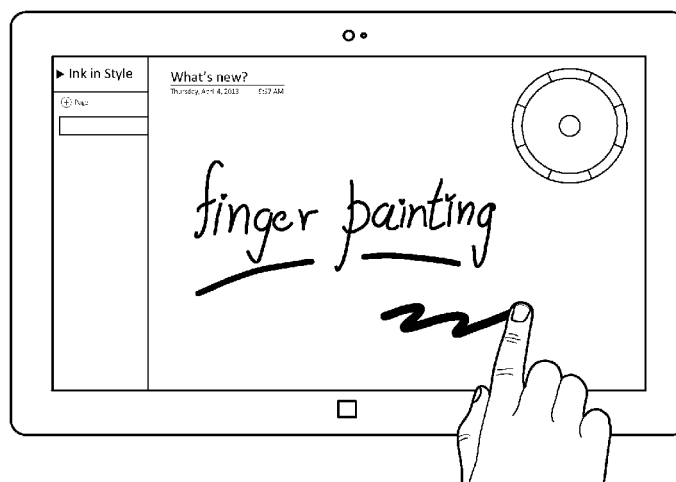
A wet ink texture engine and associated method. The wet ink
texture engine may run in the context of any application on
any device, service, or general endpoint capable of receiving
ink input. For example, the wet ink texture engine may be
used in the context of a note application that receives input in
the form of writing or drawing. The wet ink texture engine
reduces, minimizes, or eliminates lag between receiving the
input and displaying the input to improve inking experience
for the user.

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC G06F 3/038; G06F 3/04883

See application file for complete search history.

20 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets



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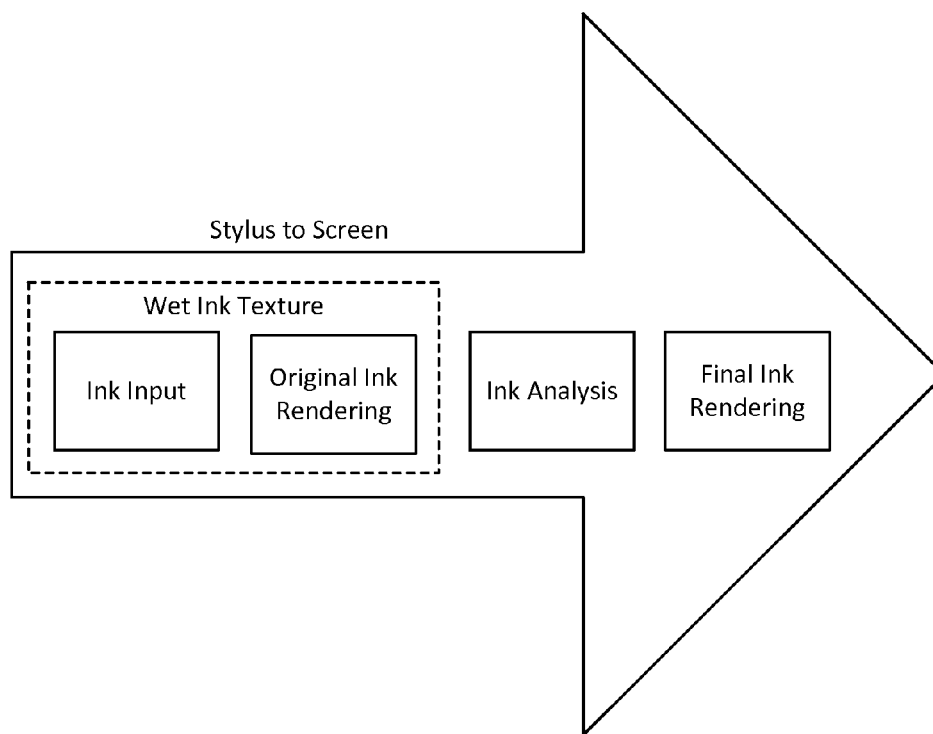


Fig. 1

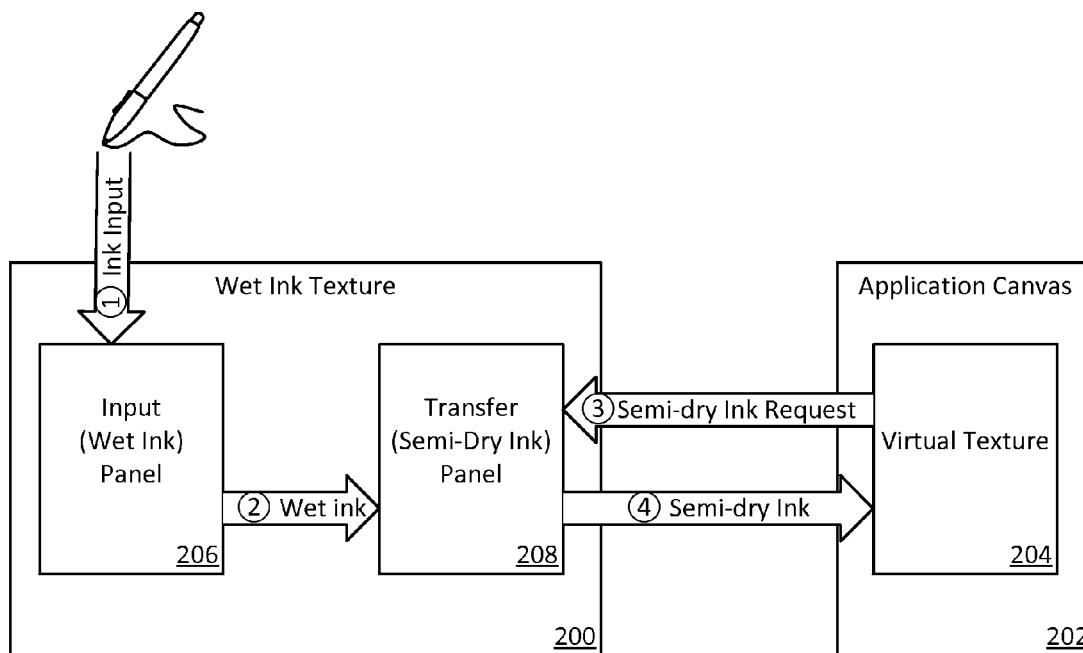


Fig. 2

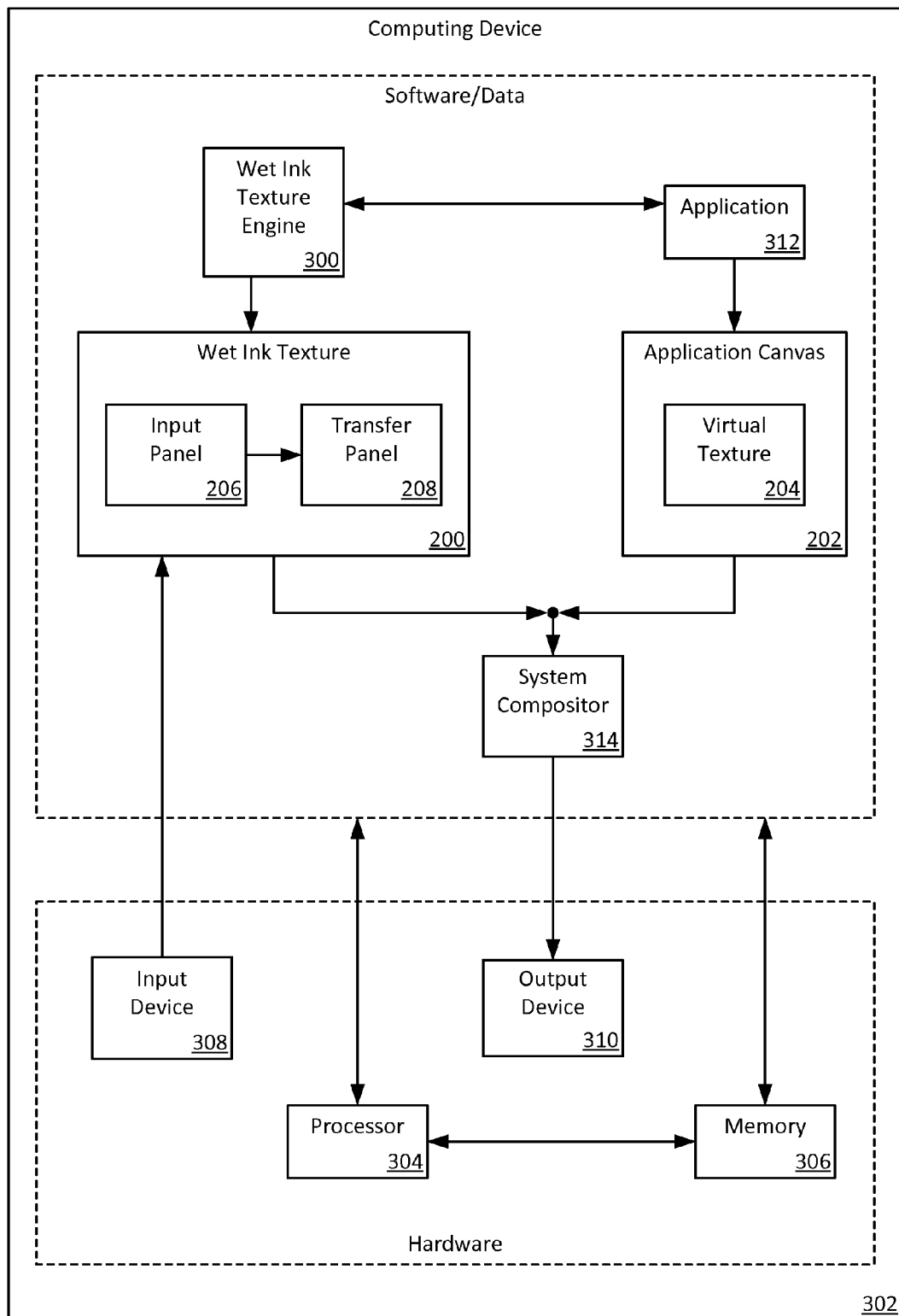


Fig. 3

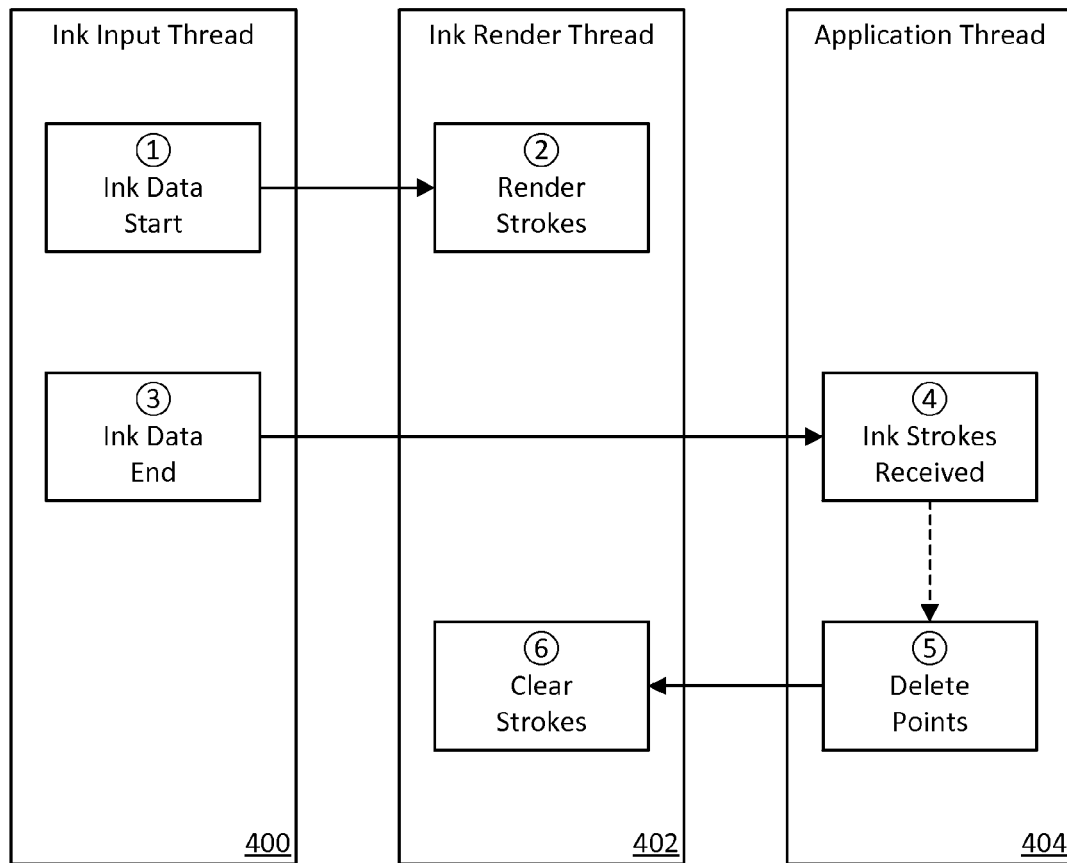


Fig. 4

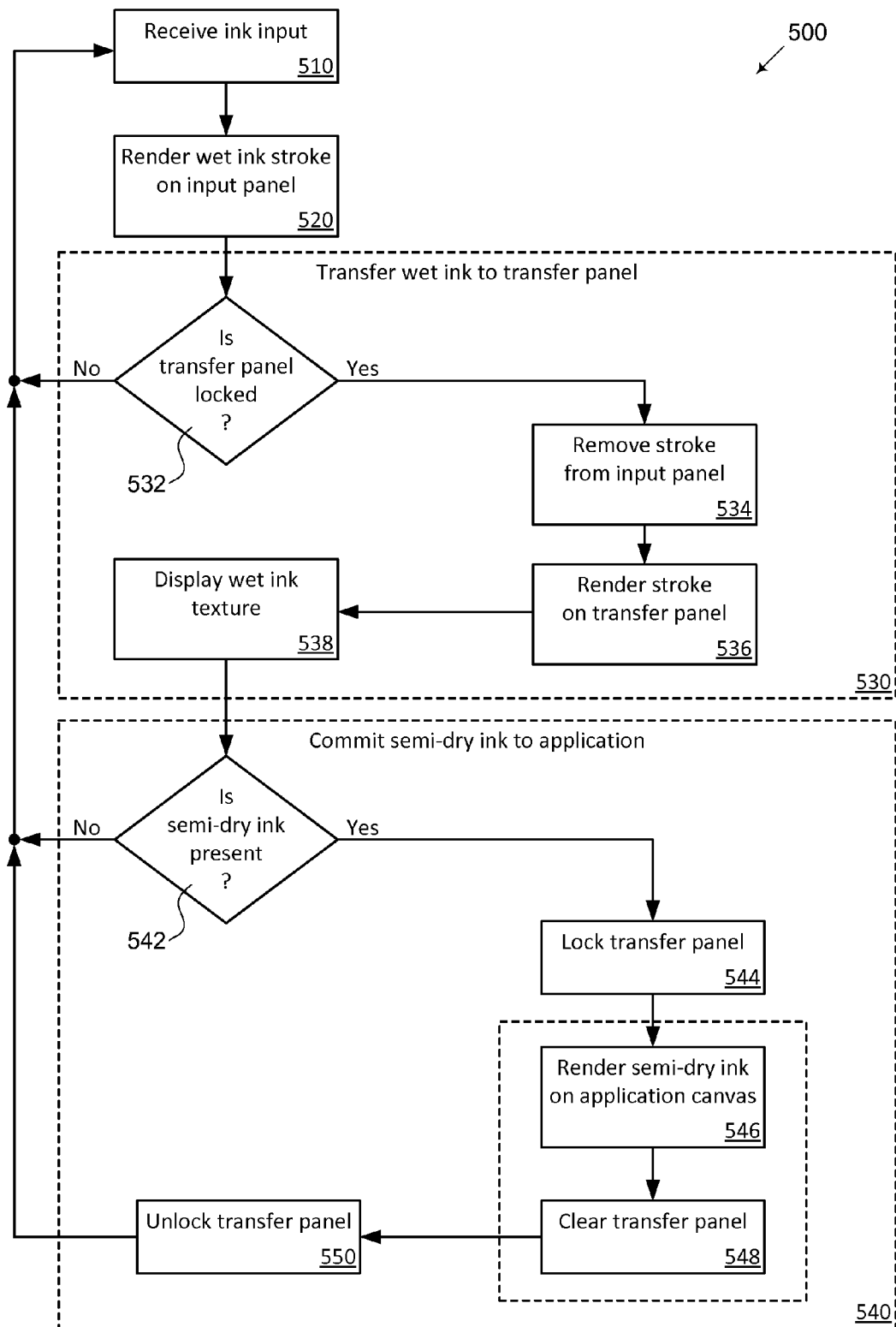


Fig. 5

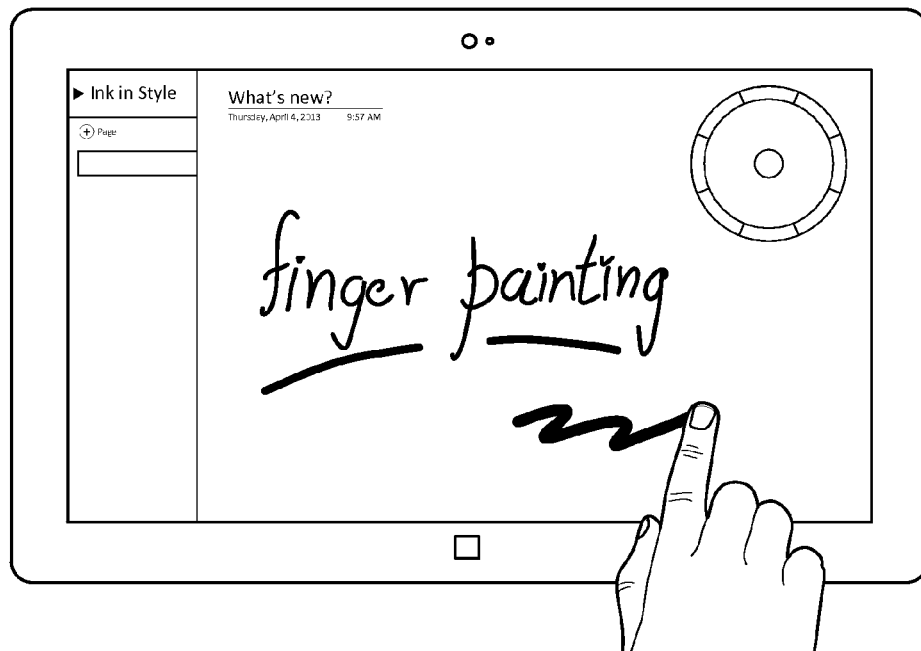


Fig. 6A

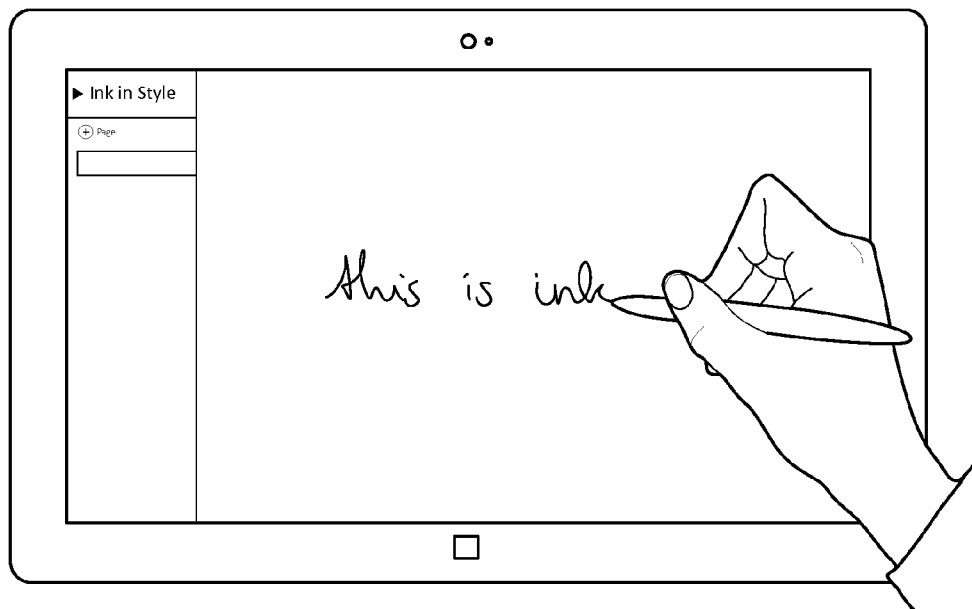


Fig. 6B

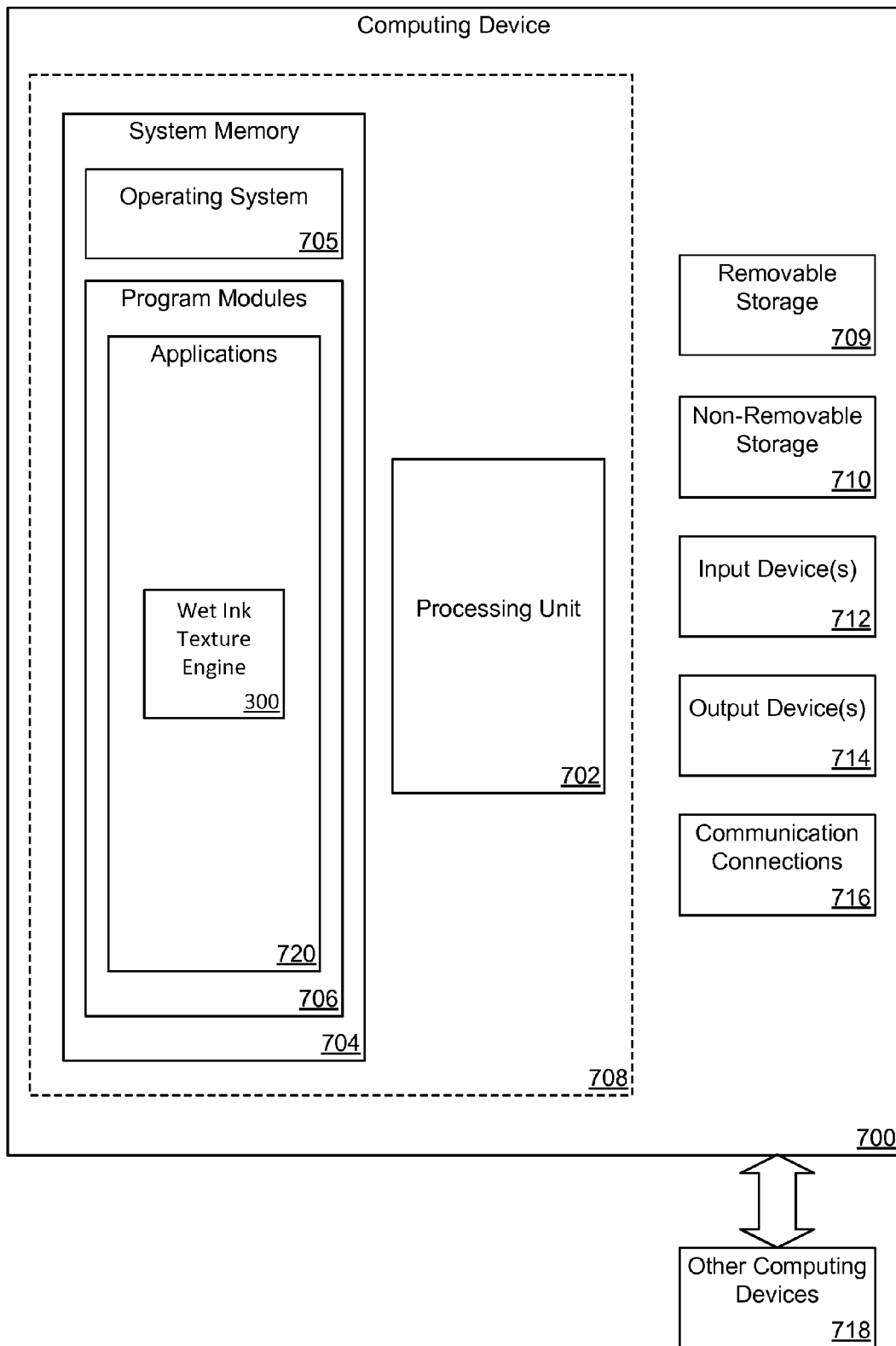


Fig. 7

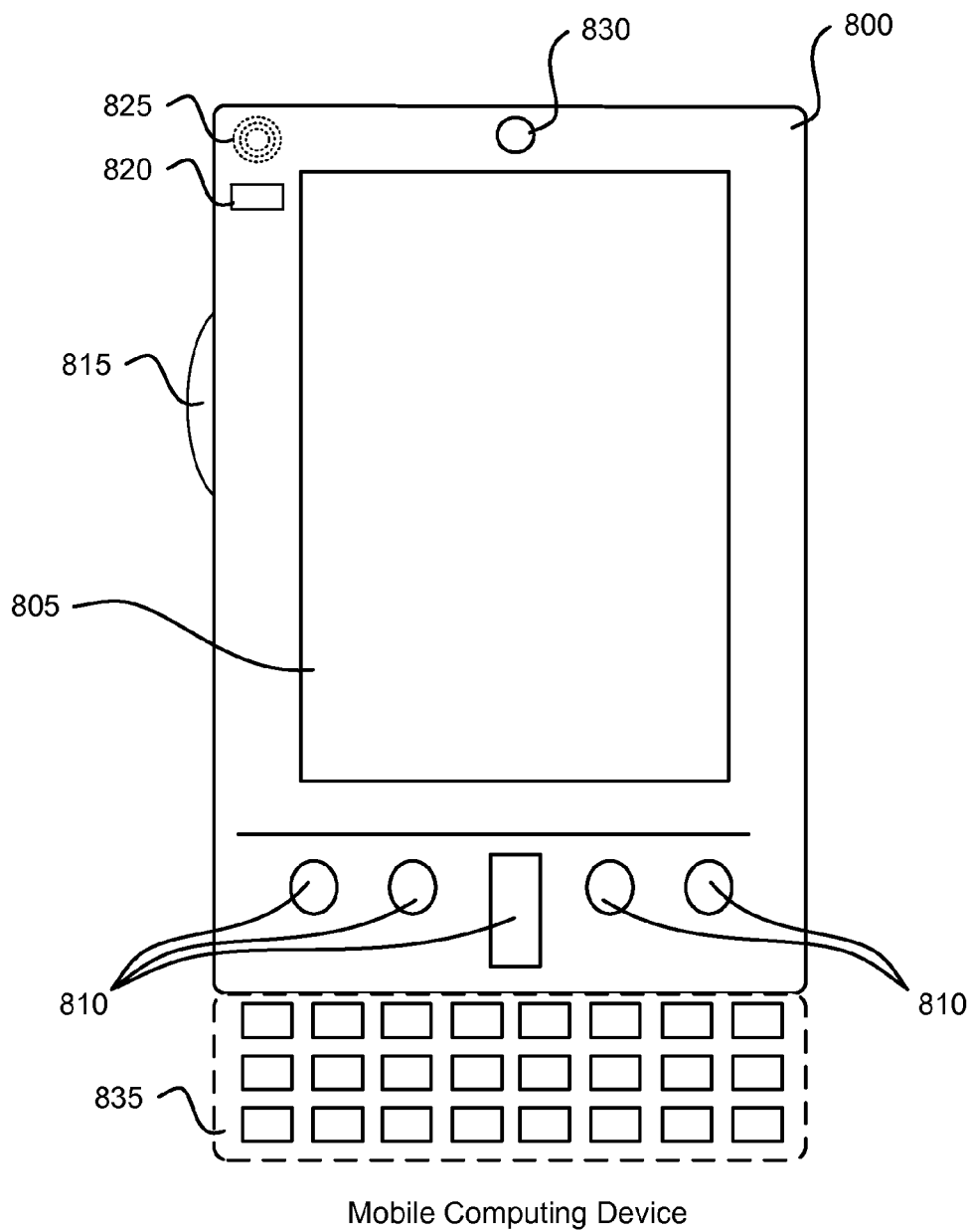


Fig. 8A

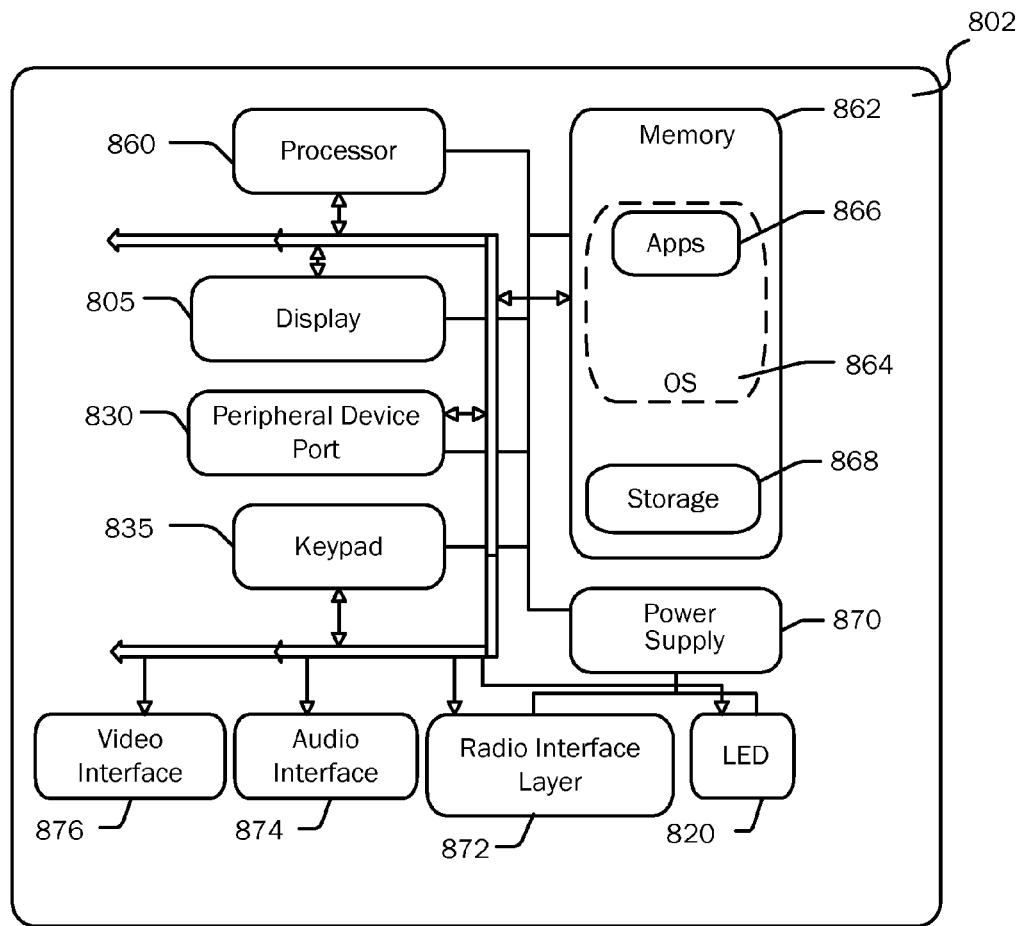


Fig. 8B

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WET INK TEXTURE ENGINE FOR REDUCED LAG DIGITAL INKING

BACKGROUND

Computers, tablets, smart phones, and other computing devices adopting natural user interfaces (NUIs) allowing users to input information as handwriting or drawings by writing directly on the screen or a digitizer are increasingly common. The process of receiving and rendering written or drawn information from a stylus is referred to as inking. The stylus may be a digital pen, mouse, finger or other suitable device that can be used to write or draw on the screen or digitizer. During inking, each move sequence of the stylus is recorded as a stroke storing the coordinates of and properties associated with the input. For example, a stroke may include the movements from the time when the pen tip is moved closed enough to be detected by the digitizer, the mouse button is depressed, or the finger touches the screen until the time that pen tip is moved away from the digitizer and no longer detectable, the mouse button is released, or the finger is no longer touching the screen. One or more strokes make up the ink (i.e., digital ink) used with applications running on the computing device.

On screen, the ink may appear as natural-looking handwriting or hand drawn pictures. In the case of handwriting, the ink may be converted to standard text through handwriting recognition. The converted text may be associated with the corresponding natural-looking handwriting as an alternate data format useful when working with (e.g., searching) inked information or may replace the natural-looking handwriting on screen and in the application (e.g., creating a typed document).

At times, the ink drawn on the screen severely lags behind the stylus. This lag is a result of the application attempting to do three actions simultaneously: process the ink input, render the ink to the screen, and save the ink to the application canvas (i.e., what the application displays to the user). Attempting to accomplish all of these tasks simultaneously slows each of them down because the user interface pipeline backs up quickly.

Lag is especially problematic for single-threaded applications, but remains a concern even for multi-threaded applications. In a multi-threaded application, lag may be addressed by creating additional threads and handling each action in a separate thread; however, this solution is not available for single-threaded applications and may not be viable or suitable for all multi-threaded applications.

When saving ink to the application canvas, lag may occur as a result of hardware timing constraints. For example, updates to the application canvas may be tied to the screen refresh frequency while input devices, such as the stylus, operate at the system bus speed. In a typical example, screens are refreshed on a 60 Hz cycle while the system bus operates at 133 Hz. Limited to one update of the application canvas per screen refresh (i.e., frame), the stylus generates ink more than twice as fast as it can be displayed by the application. As the user continues to write or draw, the ink lags further and further behind the stylus and is displayed to the user in choppy bursts rather than smoothly appearing with the movements of the stylus.

Different combinations of hardware and software have been found to produce significant lag where the ink does not appear for six or seven frames, which translates to the ink trailing the stylus by one to two inches. At a minimum, lag detracts from the pen and paper experience that inking is designed to provide. More than just being noticeable, lag

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creates efficiency and usability problems when the user has to stop and wait for the ink to catch up with the stylus so the user can see or make changes to what has been written or drawn. It is with respect to these and other considerations that the present invention has been made. Although relatively specific problems have been discussed, it should be understood that the embodiments disclosed herein should not be limited to solving the specific problems identified in the background.

BRIEF SUMMARY

This summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the Detailed Description section. This summary is not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended to be used as an aid in determining the scope of the claimed subject matter.

Embodiments described in the present disclosure provide for a wet ink texture engine that may run in the context of any application on any device, service, or general endpoint capable of receiving ink input. Ink input begins when the user starts writing or drawing with ink. Original ink rendering happens continuously and frequently while the user is actively producing ink strokes. Original ink is viewable but has not yet been transferred to the application for which the ink input is intended. The process of rendering of the original ink is referred to as wet inking. Wet inking reduces user perceptible lag between the time when the user moves the stylus and the time ink appears on the screen. Ink input stops when there is break in the active production of ink strokes. When this happens, original ink strokes are passed to an ink analysis component to produce final ink. The process of replacing of original ink with final ink is referred to as dry inking.

During wet inking, the original ink is cached in the wet ink texture. The wet ink texture is composed of wet ink and semi-dry ink. The application canvas stores the virtual texture holding the ink captured by and available in, to, and from the application (i.e., dry ink). Wet ink is stored in the input layer, and the semi-dry ink is stored in the transfer layer. Each layer is a virtual frame buffer used to hold the original ink at different stages in the wet inking process. The original ink input is rendered in the input layer. The image stored in the input layer is an unprocessed representation of the most recent ink data received, including partial strokes. Frequently presenting the input layer for display minimizes user perceptible lag between the time when the user moves the stylus and the time ink appears on the screen.

After being rendered, wet ink is moved to the transfer layer. The transfer layer serves as an intermediate frame buffer for wet ink that is ready to be committed to or consumed by the application (i.e., semi-dry ink). The transfer involves removing at least some of the rendered wet ink from the input layer and re-rendering it in the transfer layer as semi-dry ink. The image stored in the transfer layer is an unprocessed representation of wet ink that has been rendered and is ready to be moved (i.e., committed) to the application canvas.

During dry inking, at least a portion of the ink in the wet ink texture is moved to the virtual texture of the application canvas. When the application is ready to accept any available semi-dry ink, the application requests the contents of the transfer layer. The semi-dry ink is re-rendered in the virtual texture of the application canvas and the transfer layer is cleared. The flow continues until all ink is transferred from the wet ink texture to the virtual texture.

In various embodiments, the wet ink texture engine provides at least one dedicated worker thread to receive and

render ink input. Regardless of number, these worker threads are independent from the user interface (UI) thread that becomes sluggish as activity increases. Ink input happens on a dedicated ink input thread and is marshaled to a dedicated ink render thread. Rendering of the raw (i.e., wet) ink in the input layer happens on the ink render thread without any further processing of the wet ink at this time. Receiving input and rendering wet ink occurs with high priority. Once rendered, the wet ink is presented to the system compositor and displayed to the user at the next screen update. In other words, the wet ink appears on screen with minimal user perceivable lag between the time that the input is received and the time that it is displayed.

Transfer of the rendered wet strokes to the transfer layer happens on the ink render thread. The transfer may occur at lower priority than receiving input and rendering wet ink to allow the wet ink to be displayed as rapidly as possible. Following a transfer, the wet ink and the semi-dry ink are presented to the system compositor at the same or substantially the same time and displayed to the user at the next screen update. Transferring the semi-dry ink to the application as dry ink involves locking the transfer layer, re-rendering the semi-dry ink on the application canvas, and clearing the transfer layer. Once the transfer layer is locked, the semi-dry ink is marshaled to the application thread, which renders it on the application canvas as dry ink. After the dry ink has been rendered, the transfer layer is cleared and unlocked by the ink render thread.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Further features, aspects, and advantages of the present disclosure will become better understood by reference to the following figures, wherein elements are not to scale so as to more clearly show the details and wherein like reference numbers indicate like elements throughout the several views.

FIG. 1 illustrates the general flow of ink from input to screen for an application utilizing the wet ink texture engine.

FIG. 2 illustrates one embodiment of the flow of ink between the wet ink texture produced during wet inking and the virtual texture produced during dry inking.

FIG. 3 illustrates one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine in a basic computing system environment.

FIG. 4 illustrates the relationship between the threads associated with a single-threaded application utilizing one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine.

FIG. 5 illustrates one embodiment of the wet inking method performed by the wet ink texture engine.

FIG. 6A illustrates ink entered on a touch screen using a finger, without user perceptible lag, in an application utilizing one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine.

FIG. 6B illustrates ink entered on a digitizer using a digital pen, without user perceptible lag, in an application utilizing one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine.

FIG. 7 is a block diagram illustrating one embodiment of the physical components of a computing device with which embodiments of the invention may be practiced.

FIGS. 8A and 8B are simplified block diagrams of a mobile computing device with which embodiments of the present invention may be practiced.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Various embodiments of a wet ink texture engine are described herein and illustrated in the accompanying figures. The wet ink texture engine may run in the context of any application on any device, service, or general endpoint

capable of receiving ink input. For example, the wet ink texture engine may be used in the context of a note application that receives input in the form of writing or drawing. The wet ink texture engine reduces, minimizes, or eliminates lag between receiving the input and displaying the input to improve inking experience for the user.

FIG. 1 illustrates the general flow of ink from input to screen for an application utilizing the wet ink texture engine. Ink input begins when the user starts writing or drawing with ink. Examples of events signifying the start of ink input include, but are not limited to, a digital pen moving into range of the digitizer, pressing a mouse button, making finger contact with a touch screen, and activating an ink input mode in which hand movements detected by an object-tracking electronic sensor to be interpreted as writing or drawing. Original ink rendering happens continuously and as frequently as possible while the user is actively producing ink strokes. Original ink is viewable but has not yet been transferred to the application for which the ink input is intended. The process of rendering of the original ink is referred to as wet inking. Wet inking reduces user perceptible lag between the time when the user moves the stylus and the time ink appears on the screen.

Ink input stops when there is break in the active production of ink strokes. Examples of events signifying the end of ink input include, but are not limited to, a digital pen moving out of range of the digitizer, releasing the mouse button, ceasing finger contact with the touch screen, and deactivating the ink input mode. When this happens, original ink strokes are passed to an ink analysis component to produce final ink. The process of replacing of original ink with final ink is referred to as dry inking. At a minimum, the ink analysis component commits the ink to application; however, the ink analysis component may perform additional optional processing of the ink. Dry inking triggers re-rendering of original ink because dry inking involves deleting original ink strokes when rendered as final ink.

FIG. 2 illustrates one embodiment of the flow of ink between the wet ink texture produced during wet inking and the virtual texture produced during dry inking. During wet inking, the original ink is cached in the wet ink texture **200**. The wet ink texture **200** is composed of wet ink and semi-dry ink. The wet ink is texture **200** frequently updated and displayed to the user; however, the wet ink in the wet ink texture **200** is not usable by the application until dry inking occurs. The application canvas **202** stores the virtual texture **204** holding the ink captured by and available in, to, and from the application (i.e., dry ink).

The wet ink and the semi-dry ink are stored in separate layers. Wet ink is stored in the input (i.e., wet ink) layer **206**, and the semi-dry ink is stored in the transfer (i.e., semi-dry ink) layer **208**. Each layer is a virtual frame buffer used to hold the original ink at different stages in the wet inking process. The layers and the application canvas **202** may be implemented as objects (e.g., bitmaps, rasterized images, or swap chains) accessible through an application programming interface (API) handling tasks related to displaying graphics (e.g., DirectX), controls (e.g., swap chain layers) in a visual presentation markup language, such as the Extensible Application Markup Language (XAML), or managed rendering surfaces using a visual presentation markup language to manage the interactions between the graphics display API and the image source. In various embodiments, the application canvas **202** is a managed rendering surface, such as a Virtual Surface Image Source (VSIS) or a Surface Image Source (SIS), and the input layer **206** and transfer (i.e., semi-dry ink) layers are swap chain layers.

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The original ink input is rendered in the input (i.e., wet ink) layer. The image stored in the input layer **206** is an unprocessed (i.e., raw) representation of the most recent ink data received, including partial strokes. Frequently presenting the input layer **206** for display minimizes user perceptible lag between the time when the user moves the stylus and the time ink appears on the screen.

After being rendered, wet ink is moved to the transfer (i.e., semi-dry ink) layer. The transfer layer **208** serves as an intermediate frame buffer for wet ink that is ready to be committed or consumed to the application (i.e., semi-dry ink). The transfer involves removing at least some of the rendered wet ink from the input layer **206** and re-rendering it in the transfer layer **208** as semi-dry ink. The image stored in the transfer layer **208** is an unprocessed representation of wet ink that has been rendered and is ready to be moved (i.e., committed) to the application canvas.

During dry inking, at least a portion of the wet ink is moved to the virtual texture **204** of the application canvas. When the application is ready to accept any available semi-dry ink, the application requests the contents of the transfer layer. The semi-dry ink is re-rendered in the virtual texture **204** of the application canvas **202** and the transfer layer **208** is cleared. The flow continues until all ink is transferred from the wet ink texture **200** to the virtual texture.

FIG. 3 illustrates one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine in a basic computing system environment. The wet ink texture engine **300** runs on a computing device **302**. The computing device generally includes hardware components including a processor **304**, a memory **306**, an input device **308**, and an output device **310**. The processor **304** executes the software components including, but not limited to, the wet ink texture engine **300**, the application **312**, and the system compositor **314**, and performs other logical and control functions. The memory **306** stores the software components and associated data including, but not limited to, the wet ink texture **200**, the virtual texture **204**, the input layer **206**, and the transfer layer **208**. Examples of suitable computing devices usable with the wet ink texture engine **300** include, but not limited to, desktop computers, laptop computers, tablet computers, surface computers, and smart phones.

The input device **308** is a coordinate-based input device. In various embodiments of the input device, a stylus is used for inking (i.e., writing or drawing on) a surface. In some embodiments, the stylus is an active component (e.g., a digital pen or mouse) that produces a coordinate-based input as it moves. An active stylus may be used with a passive surface (e.g., a piece of paper, mouse pad, or desktop). In other embodiments, the surface is the active component (e.g., a digitizer or touch screen) that produces a coordinate-based input based on the position and movement of the user's finger, a digital pen, or other stylus (either active or passive). In some embodiments, the input device **308** is an electronic sensor that produces a coordinate-based input based on movement of a user's body (e.g., a finger, hand, or arm) or other object relative to a screen image displayed or projected on a large surface (e.g., a wall, table, or digital whiteboard). In various embodiments, the electronic sensor operates based on infrared, ultrasonic, thermal, laser, or other vision- or sonic-based sensing technology suitable for tracking an object. One example of a suitable electronic sensor is a Microsoft® Kinect® sensor. It should be appreciated that the input device **308** may also be used for inputs other than inking.

The output device **310** is a visual display device for presenting information, including the application user interface and ink to the user. Examples of suitable output devices include, but are not limited to, display screens, monitors,

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projectors, and digital white boards. As previously mentioned, the layers and the application canvas **202** are combined to produce the final image displayable on the output device **310**. For example, the wet ink texture engine **300** may present each of the layers to a system compositor **314** running on the computing device while the application may present the application canvas **202** to the system compositor **314**. The system compositor **314** receives image sources from the applications running on the computing devices and composes the final image that is displayed on the screen.

The wet ink texture engine **300** operates in conjunction with an application capable of receiving ink through the coordinate-based input device. For example, the wet ink texture engine **300** may operate in conjunction with an application **312** (e.g., a note application, drawing application, or an operating system) running on the computing device. In various embodiments, the wet ink texture engine **300** is an integrated component of the application. In other embodiments, the wet ink texture engine **300** and the application are separate but interactive components. For example, the wet ink texture engine **300** may be a service, add-in, interface, applet, or other software component callable by or otherwise working with the application to process ink inputs.

FIG. 4 illustrates the relationship between the threads associated with a single-threaded application utilizing one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine. The wet ink texture engine **300** may be used with both single- and multi-threaded applications; however, greater benefit may be experienced with single-threaded applications and multi-threaded applications having a single thread for receiving, rendering, and processing inputs. In various embodiments, the wet ink texture engine **300** provides two dedicated worker threads to receive and render ink input. In other embodiments, the wet ink texture engine **300** provides a single dedicated worker thread to receive and render ink input. Regardless of number, these worker threads are independent from the single application or user interface (UI) thread that becomes sluggish as activity increases.

Ink input happens on a dedicated ink input thread **400** and is marshaled to a dedicated ink render thread **402**. Rendering of the raw (i.e., wet) ink in the input layer **206** happens on the ink render thread **402** without any further processing of the wet ink at this time. Receiving input and rendering wet ink occurs with high priority. Once rendered, the wet ink is presented to the system compositor and displayed to the user at the next screen update. In other words, the wet ink appears on screen with minimal user perceivable lag between the time that the input is received and the time that it is displayed.

Transfer of the rendered wet strokes to the transfer layer **208** happens on the ink render thread **402**. The transfer may occur at lower priority than receiving input and rendering wet ink to allow the wet ink to be displayed as rapidly as possible. In some embodiments, the semi-dry ink conversion occurs substantially contemporaneously with rendering the wet ink. In other embodiments, the semi-dry ink conversion occurs at a break in ink input. In such cases, the transfer layer **208** will only contain complete strokes, which may be useful to facilitate optional processing when the semi-dry ink strokes are committed to the application.

Following a transfer, the wet ink and the semi-dry ink are presented to the system compositor **314** at the same or substantially the same time and displayed to the user at the next screen update. Waiting to present the input layer **206** with the transfer layer **208** once the semi-dry ink has been rendered, instead of presenting the input layer **206** immediately after the wet ink has been removed, works to maintain the visual fidelity of the ink display. For example, synchronizing the

presentation of the input and transfer layers minimizes user perceived flicker that might result from the displaying the input and transfer layers after the wet ink has been removed and before it has been re-rendered as semi-dry ink.

Transferring the semi-dry ink to the application as dry (i.e., committed) ink involves locking the transfer layer **208**, re-rendering the semi-dry ink on the application canvas **202**, and clearing the transfer layer **208**. Once the transfer layer **208** is locked, the semi-dry ink is marshaled to the application on the application thread **404**, which renders it on the application canvas as dry ink. In various embodiments, the application thread **404** is the UI thread. In other embodiments, the application thread **404** is a dedicated worker thread for rendering ink to the application canvas **202**. After the dry ink has been rendered, the transfer layer **208** is cleared and unlocked by the ink render thread **402**. In various embodiments, the application thread **404** sends a request for the ink render thread **402** to delete the contents of the transfer layer **208** after rendering the dry ink.

As discussed above, the application may periodically poll the wet ink texture engine **300** to determine if semi-dry ink is available. In some embodiments, the wet ink texture engine **300** may provide notification to the application at a break in ink input and/or at the end semi-dry ink conversion. Committing semi-dry ink to the application may occur at lower priority than receiving and rendering wet ink and/or converting wet ink to semi-dry ink. In some embodiments, committing semi-dry ink may only occur when sufficient resources are available to minimize the likelihood of causing user perceptible ink lag. For example, committing semi-dry ink may only occur when processor utilization is below a threshold level.

In various embodiments, the application thread **404** performs optional processing before or after rendering the dry ink. In some embodiments, the semi-dry ink strokes are smoothed before being rendered to the application canvas. In some embodiments, the semi-dry ink strokes are subjected to character recognition processing to identify ink corresponding to writing. The results of character recognition may be used to enhance the appearance of handwritten text (e.g., to improve legibility or aesthetic quality) or to create an object containing standard characters (e.g., ASCII, Unicode, or other computer readable text) corresponding to the handwritten text to facilitate use (e.g., indexing or full text searching) of the information represented by the ink by the application or other software accessing the application data. Such additional processing is generally, but not necessarily, provided separately and independently from the wet ink texture engine.

FIG. **5** illustrates one embodiment of the wet inking method facilitated by the wet ink texture engine. The wet inking method **500** begins with the user writing or drawing an ink input. As the user writes or draws, the wet ink input operation **510** captures the ink. The wet ink rendering operation **520** renders the ink in the input layer **206** and presents the input layer **206** for display as the system continues to receive ink input. After the wet ink is rendered, a semi-dry transfer operation **530** moves each stroke to the transfer layer. Moving the stroke from the input layer **206** to the transfer layer **208** involves multiple operations. First, a lock check operation **532** determines whether the transfer layer **208** is locked. If locked, strokes cannot be moved to the transfer layer **208**. If the transfer layer **208** is not locked, a wet stroke removal operation **534** deletes the stroke being moved from the input layer. Finally, the semi-dry rendering operation **536** renders the stroke being moved in the transfer layer **208**. Once the stroke has been moved, the synchronized presentation operation **538** presents both the input and transfer layers for display. By contemporaneously presenting both the input layer

206 and the transfer layer **208** for display, the transfer of the stroke is virtually unnoticeable to user.

Semi-dry ink rendered in the transfer layer **208** is available to be committed to the application canvas **202** in the semi-dry ink commit operation **540**. In various embodiments, the semi-dry ink commit operation **540** begins with a semi-dry ink availability operation **542** that confirms the availability of semi-dry ink in response a request from the application thread. If semi-dry ink is available, the transfer layer lock operation **544** locks the transfer layer **208**. Locking the transfer layer **208** prevents freshly-rendered wet ink from being converted to semi-dry ink. While the transfer layer **208** is locked, wet ink continues to accumulate in the input layer **206** and be displayed to the user. Once the transfer layer **208** is locked, the dry ink render operation **546** re-renders the semi-dry ink in the transfer layer on the application canvas. Once the dry ink has been rendered, the transfer layer clear operation **548** deletes the semi-dry ink in the transfer layer **208**. After the transfer layer **208** is cleared, the transfer layer unlock operation **550** unlocks the transfer layer **208**.

Locking the transfer layer **208** keeps the semi-dry ink committed to the application separate from wet ink received during the commit operation. By locking the transfer layer **208**, only the semi-dry ink that is actually committed to the application is cleared. Without the lock, wet ink converted to semi-dry ink after the application thread **404** collects the available semi-dry ink and before the transfer layer **208** would be cleared and lost.

The subject matter of this application may be practiced in a variety of embodiments as systems, devices, and other articles of manufacture or as methods. Embodiments may be implemented as hardware, software, computer readable media, or a combination thereof. The embodiments and functionalities described herein may operate via a multitude of computing systems including, without limitation, desktop computer systems, wired and wireless computing systems, mobile computing systems (e.g., mobile telephones, netbooks, tablet or slate type computers, notebook computers, and laptop computers), hand-held devices, multiprocessor systems, microprocessor-based or programmable consumer electronics, minicomputers, and mainframe computers. FIGS. **6A** and **6B**, respectively, show ink being entered, without user perceptible lag, in an application utilizing one embodiment of the wet ink texture engine **300** using a finger with a touch screen-based computing device and using a digital pen with a computing device having a digitizer.

User interfaces and information of various types may be displayed via on-board computing device displays or via remote display units associated with one or more computing devices. For example, user interfaces and information of various types may be displayed and interacted with on a wall surface onto which user interfaces and information of various types are projected. Interaction with the multitude of computing systems with which embodiments of the invention may be practiced include, keystroke entry, touch screen entry, voice or other audio entry, gesture entry where an associated computing device is equipped with detection (e.g., camera) functionality for capturing and interpreting user gestures for controlling the functionality of the computing device, and the like.

FIGS. **7** and **8** and the associated descriptions provide a discussion of a variety of operating environments in which embodiments of the invention may be practiced. However, the devices and systems illustrated and discussed are for purposes of example and illustration and are not limiting of a vast

number of computing device configurations that may be utilized for practicing embodiments of the invention described above.

FIG. 7 is a block diagram illustrating physical components (i.e., hardware) of a computing device 700 with which embodiments of the invention may be practiced. The computing device components described below may be suitable for embodying computing devices including, but not limited to, a personal computer, a tablet computer, a surface computer, and a smart phone, or any other computing device discussed herein. In a basic configuration, the computing device 700 may include at least one processing unit 702 and a system memory 704. Depending on the configuration and type of computing device, the system memory 704 may comprise, but is not limited to, volatile storage (e.g., random access memory), non-volatile storage (e.g., read-only memory), flash memory, or any combination of such memories. The system memory 704 may include an operating system 705 and one or more program modules 706 suitable for running software applications 720 such as the wet ink texture engine 300. For example, the operating system 705 may be suitable for controlling the operation of the computing device 700. Furthermore, embodiments of the invention may be practiced in conjunction with a graphics library, other operating systems, or any other application program and is not limited to any particular application or system. This basic configuration is illustrated by those components within a dashed line 708. The computing device 700 may have additional features or functionality. For example, the computing device 700 may also include additional data storage devices (removable and/or non-removable) such as, for example, magnetic disks, optical disks, or tape. Such additional storage is illustrated by a removable storage device 709 and a non-removable storage device 710.

As stated above, a number of program modules and data files may be stored in the system memory 704. While executing on the processing unit 702, the software applications 720 may perform processes including, but not limited to, one or more of the stages of the wet inking method 500. Other program modules that may be used in accordance with embodiments of the present invention may include electronic mail and contacts applications, word processing applications, spreadsheet applications, database applications, slide presentation applications, drawing or computer-aided application programs, etc.

Furthermore, embodiments of the invention may be practiced in an electrical circuit comprising discrete electronic elements, packaged or integrated electronic chips containing logic gates, a circuit utilizing a microprocessor, or on a single chip containing electronic elements or microprocessors. For example, embodiments of the invention may be practiced via a system-on-a-chip (SOC) where each or many of the illustrated components may be integrated onto a single integrated circuit. Such an SOC device may include one or more processing units, graphics units, communications units, system virtualization units and various application functionality all of which are integrated (or “burned”) onto the chip substrate as a single integrated circuit. When operating via an SOC, the functionality described herein with respect to the software applications 720 may be operated via application-specific logic integrated with other components of the computing device 700 on the single integrated circuit (chip). Embodiments of the invention may also be practiced using other technologies capable of performing logical operations such as, for example, AND, OR, and NOT, including but not limited to mechanical, optical, fluidic, and quantum technolo-

gies. In addition, embodiments of the invention may be practiced within a general purpose computer or in any other circuits or systems.

The computing device 700 may also have one or more input device(s) 712 such as a keyboard, a mouse, a pen, a sound input device, a touch input device, etc. The output device(s) 714 such as a display, speakers, a printer, etc. may also be included. The aforementioned devices are examples and others may be used. The computing device 700 may include one or more communication connections 716 allowing communications with other computing devices 718. Examples of suitable communication connections 716 include, but are not limited to, RF transmitter, receiver, and/or transceiver circuitry; universal serial bus (USB), parallel, and/or serial ports.

The term computer readable media as used herein may include computer storage media. Computer storage media may include volatile and nonvolatile, removable and non-removable media implemented in any method or technology for storage of information, such as computer readable instructions, data structures, or program modules. The system memory 704, the removable storage device 709, and the non-removable storage device 710 are all examples of computer storage media (i.e., memory storage.) Computer storage media may include random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), electrically erasable read-only memory (EEPROM), flash memory or other memory technology, compact disc read only memory (CD-ROM), digital versatile disks (DVD) or other optical storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other article of manufacture which can be used to store information and which can be accessed by the computing device 700. Any such computer storage media may be part of the computing device 700.

FIGS. 8A and 8B illustrate a mobile computing device 800 with which embodiments of the invention may be practiced. Examples of suitable mobile computing devices include, but are not limited to, a mobile telephone, a smart phone, a tablet computer, a surface computer, and a laptop computer. In a basic configuration, the mobile computing device 800 is a handheld computer having both input elements and output elements. The mobile computing device 800 typically includes a display 805 and one or more input buttons 810 that allow the user to enter information into the mobile computing device 800. The display 805 of the mobile computing device 800 may also function as an input device 308 (e.g., a touch screen display). If included, an optional side input element 815 allows further user input. The side input element 815 may be a rotary switch, a button, or any other type of manual input element. In alternative embodiments, mobile computing device 800 may incorporate more or less input elements. For example, the display 805 may not be a touch screen in some embodiments. In yet another alternative embodiment, the mobile computing device 800 is a portable phone system, such as a cellular phone. The mobile computing device 800 may also include an optional keypad 835. Optional keypad 835 may be a physical keypad or a “soft” keypad generated on the touch screen display. In various embodiments, the output elements include the display 805 for showing a graphical user interface, a visual indicator 820 (e.g., a light emitting diode), and/or an audio transducer 825 (e.g., a speaker). In some embodiments, the mobile computing device 800 incorporates a vibration transducer for providing the user with tactile feedback. In yet another embodiment, the mobile computing device 800 incorporates input and/or output ports, such as an audio input (e.g., a microphone jack), an audio output (e.g., a

headphone jack), and a video output (e.g., a HDMI port) for sending signals to or receiving signals from an external device.

FIG. 8B is a block diagram illustrating the architecture of one embodiment of a mobile computing device. That is, the mobile computing device **800** can incorporate a system (i.e., an architecture) **802** to implement some embodiments. In one embodiment, the system **802** is implemented as a smart phone capable of running one or more applications (e.g., browsers, e-mail clients, notes, contact managers, messaging clients, games, and media clients/players). In some embodiments, the system **802** is integrated as a computing device, such as an integrated personal digital assistant (PDA) and wireless phone.

One or more application programs **866** may be loaded into the memory **862** and run on or in association with the operating system **864**. Examples of the application programs include phone dialer programs, e-mail programs, personal information management (PIM) programs, word processing programs, spreadsheet programs, Internet browser programs, messaging programs, and so forth. The system **802** also includes a non-volatile storage area **868** within the memory **862**. The non-volatile storage area **868** may be used to store persistent information that should not be lost if the system **802** is powered down. The application programs **866** may use and store information in the non-volatile storage area **868**, such as e-mail or other messages used by an e-mail application, and the like. A synchronization application (not shown) also resides on the system **802** and is programmed to interact with a corresponding synchronization application resident on a host computer to keep the information stored in the non-volatile storage area **868** synchronized with corresponding information stored at the host computer. As should be appreciated, other applications may be loaded into the memory **862** and run on the mobile computing device **800**, including software applications **720** described herein.

The system **802** has a power supply **870**, which may be implemented as one or more batteries. The power supply **870** might further include an external power source, such as an AC adapter or a powered docking cradle that supplements or recharges the batteries.

The system **802** may also include a radio **872** that performs the function of transmitting and receiving radio frequency communications. The radio **872** facilitates wireless connectivity between the system **802** and the outside world via a communications carrier or service provider. Transmissions to and from the radio **872** are conducted under control of the operating system **864**. In other words, communications received by the radio **872** may be disseminated to the application programs **866** via the operating system **864**, and vice versa.

The visual indicator **820** may be used to provide visual notifications, and/or an audio interface **874** may be used for producing audible notifications via the audio transducer **825**. In the illustrated embodiment, the visual indicator **820** is a light emitting diode (LED) and the audio transducer **825** is a speaker. These devices may be directly coupled to the power supply **870** so that when activated, they remain on for a duration dictated by the notification mechanism even though the processor **860** and other components might shut down for conserving battery power. The LED may be programmed to remain on indefinitely until the user takes action to indicate the powered-on status of the device. The audio interface **874** is used to provide audible signals to and receive audible signals from the user. For example, in addition to being coupled to the audio transducer **825**, the audio interface **874** may also be coupled to a microphone to receive audible input,

such as to facilitate a telephone conversation. In accordance with embodiments of the present invention, the microphone may also serve as an audio sensor to facilitate control of notifications, as will be described below. The system **802** may further include a video interface **876** that enables an operation of an on-board camera **830** to record still images, video stream, and the like.

A mobile computing device **800** implementing the system **802** may have additional features or functionality. For example, the mobile computing device **800** may also include additional data storage devices (removable and/or non-removable) such as, magnetic disks, optical disks, or tape. Such additional storage is illustrated by the non-volatile storage area **868**.

Data/information generated or captured by the mobile computing device **800** and stored via the system **802** may be stored locally on the mobile computing device **800**, as described above, or the data may be stored on any number of storage media that may be accessed by the device via the radio **872** or via a wired connection between the mobile computing device **800** and a separate computing device associated with the mobile computing device **800**, for example, a server computer in a distributed computing network, such as the Internet. As should be appreciated such data/information may be accessed via the mobile computing device **800** via the radio **872** or via a distributed computing network. Similarly, such data/information may be readily transferred between computing devices for storage and use according to well-known data/information transfer and storage means, including electronic mail and collaborative data/information sharing systems.

The description and illustration of one or more embodiments provided in this application are intended to provide a complete thorough and complete disclosure the full scope of the subject matter to those skilled in the art and not intended to limit or restrict the scope of the invention as claimed in any way. The embodiments, examples, and details provided in this application are considered sufficient to convey possession and enable those skilled in the art to practice the best mode of claimed invention. Descriptions of structures, resources, operations, and acts considered well-known to those skilled in the art may be brief or omitted to avoid obscuring lesser known or unique aspects of the subject matter of this application. The claimed invention should not be construed as being limited to any embodiment, example, or detail provided in this application unless expressly stated herein. Regardless of whether shown or described collectively or separately, the various features (both structural and methodological) are intended to be selectively included or omitted to produce an embodiment with a particular set of features. Further, any or all of the functions and acts shown or described may be performed in any order or concurrently. Having been provided with the description and illustration of the present application, one skilled in the art may envision variations, modifications, and alternate embodiments falling within the spirit of the broader aspects of the general inventive concept embodied in this application that do not depart from the broader scope of the claimed invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for reducing lag between receiving and displaying input, the method comprising:
 - receiving input and rendering the input as wet ink;
 - buffering the wet ink to generate semi-dry ink by re-rendering one or more portions of the wet ink; and
 - synchronously displaying the wet ink and the semi-dry ink within an application canvas of an application executing on an input device.

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2. The method of claim 1, wherein rendering the input further comprises processing the received input as wet ink strokes and storing the wet ink strokes to an input layer buffer.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the buffering of the wet ink further comprises transferring the wet ink strokes to a transfer layer buffer and generating semi-dry ink strokes based on the re-rendering.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the re-rendering further comprises:

- removing a first wet ink stroke from the input layer;
- rendering remaining wet ink strokes to generate the semi-dry ink strokes; and
- storing the rendered semi-dry ink strokes in the transfer layer buffer.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the buffering further comprises locking the transfer layer buffer, and transmitting the semi-dry ink strokes to an application for commitment of the semi-dry ink strokes.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the buffering further comprises unlocking the transfer layer buffer in response to transmitting the semi-dry ink strokes to the application.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the buffering further comprises deleting the semi-dry ink strokes from the transfer layer buffer in response to transmitting the semi-dry ink strokes to the application.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising re-rendering the semi-dry ink for commitment to the application.

9. A system for reducing lag during inking, the system comprising:

- at least one memory; and
- at least one processor operatively connected with the memory and configured to:
 - receive an input and render the input as wet ink,
 - buffer the wet ink to generate semi-dry ink by re-rendering one or more portions of the wet ink, and
 - synchronously display the wet ink and the semi-dry ink within an application canvas of an application executing on an input device.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein rendering of the input further comprises processing the received input as wet ink strokes and storing the wet ink strokes to an input layer.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein buffering of the wet ink further comprises transferring the wet ink strokes to a transfer layer buffer and generating semi-dry ink strokes based on the re-rendering.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the re-rendering further comprises:

- removing a first wet ink stroke from the input layer,
- rendering remaining wet ink strokes to generate the semi-dry ink strokes, and

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storing the rendered semi-dry ink strokes in the transfer layer buffer.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein buffering further comprises locking the transfer layer buffer, and transmitting the semi-dry ink strokes to an application for commitment of the semi-dry ink strokes.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein buffering further comprises unlocking the transfer layer buffer in response to transmitting the semi-dry ink strokes to the application.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein buffering further comprises deleting the semi-dry ink strokes from the transfer layer buffer in response to transmitting the semi-dry ink strokes to the application.

16. The system of claim 12, wherein the processor is configured to re-render the semi-dry ink for commitment to the application.

17. The system of claim 9, wherein the system is an input device that receives input from one or more selected from a group consisting of: a digital pen, a touch screen, a digitizer, a mouse, and an object-tracking electronic sensor.

18. A system comprising:

- at least one processor; and
- a memory operatively connected with the at least one processor, wherein the memory stores computer executable instructions which, when executed by the at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to perform a method that comprises:
 - storing, in a first buffer, wet ink rendered from processing of a received input;
 - buffering, using a second buffer, the wet ink to generate semi-dry ink by re-rendering one or more portions of the wet ink;
 - storing the semi-dry ink in the second buffer; and
 - simultaneously presenting the wet ink and the semi-dry ink within an application canvas of an application.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the method executed by the at least one processor further comprises:

- locking the second buffer;
- transmitting the semi-dry ink to the application canvas;
- deleting the contents of the second buffer; and
- unlocking the second buffer.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein the method executed by the at least one processor further comprises:

- executing a first thread to render the wet ink using the first buffer;
- executing a second thread to generate the semi-dry ink; and
- executing a third thread to commit the buffered wet ink and the buffered semi-dry ink to the application canvas.

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